

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A multimedia direct access storage device and a method for transferring source program signals representative of a compressed digital multimedia program to and from the direct access storage device are disclosed.

A multimedia program is transmitted from a multimedia server as a custom ordered series of discrete program segments and received by the multimedia direct access storage device, which buffers the compressed program segments for subsequent presentation on a local display monitor. The multimedia direct access storage device is preferably incorporated as a component of a local set-top control system for buffering a predetermined number of compressed program segments received from the multimedia server, some of which may be non-sequentially ordered and others of which may be sequentially ordered. A novel formatting methodology provides for the sequential presentation of the program segments asynchronously distributed on one or more data storage disks disposed in the direct access storage device. A user-definable presentation control window for performing local VCR-type presentation control functions for the portion of a multimedia program buffered in the direct access storage device is also provided through the novel formatting methodology. ~~The novel formatting methodology also provides concurrent presentation and buffering of program segments received from the multimedia server for on-demand viewing of a selected multimedia program.~~

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